

FITNESS

One Step at a Time

What small device can help you control weight and reduce your risk for chronic diseases, like cancer, diabetes and heart disease? A pedometer.

This tiny, electronic gadget counts your steps, when fastened to your belt. Set it at zero in the morning and by the time you go to bed, the meter will tell you how many steps you took all day. People who use a pedometer often become obsessed with counting their steps. In a sedentary society like ours, this habit can be a healthy obsession.

Many health experts recommend a goal of 10,000 steps per day. But researchers at the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) emphasize that it's more important to gradually increase activity from whatever level you are currently at to the level your health and stamina will allow. By increasing energy expenditure, you can more easily maintain a healthy weight. But there is another benefit. By fighting excess weight, the pedometer can help counteract the risk of cancer associated with obesity and overweight. A review of scientific literature by AICR has linked obesity to breast cancer in postmenopausal women, as well as to colorectal, prostate, pancreatic, endometrial, kidney and possibly ovarian cancers.

Pedometers come in a variety of brands, models and prices. In fact, Prevention Partners sells pedometers for \$15.75. Prevention Partners pedometers have proven to be very successful among people who purchase them. They have become a part of some people's wardrobe and many do not make a move without it! To order a pedometer from Prevention Partners, log onto www.eip.state.sc.us - click onto the Prevention Partners' logo and go to the product and services section and print an order form. Make all checks payable to Employee Insurance Program (EIP.)

Success Story

A 42-year-old mother saw that she took 8,000 steps with a pedometer during her daily routine. Consequently, she began walking her daughter to school instead of driving. Her total then rose to 12,000 steps on weekdays. She even bought a pedometer for her daughter, which is a good idea. Inactivity is rampant among children and childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions.



STATE HEALTH PLAN PREVENTION PARTNERS
South Carolina Budget and Control Board
Employee Insurance Program
December 2002

